MAR 0 9 2011 HB 456

To whomever it may concern,

My name is Alec. I was an active member of Planned Parenthood of Montana's Teen Board peer education group from the fall of 2004 through the fall of 2007. I participated in educational presentations for high school students in the Medical Careers classes in Billings MT, as well as other outreach opportunities including workshops, legislative activities and fundraising events. I feel very lucky to have participated in this group because of the important information about human sexuality that I learned. I and my co-members were able to answer questions and provide help to other teens, our friends and family members. The openness and honesty with which this information was taught to us helped me be more open with my parents and others about this topic. I have taken what I have learned and applied it to my own life and relationships and have even given helpful advice to my peers in college.

I enjoyed helping with the presentations to the various classes in high school. The classes focused on methods and proper use of contraceptives currently accepted by modern medicine. The classes relied on the most recent data gathered by medical professionals from around the United States and did not impose on any political boundaries. They were taught in a professional and strictly informative, non-rhetorical manner. The PPMT Teen Board program was vital component of the Medical Careers students' curriculum and if prohibited would negatively impact the proper education of one of human medicine's most important aspects.

These contraceptive lessons were highly effective at properly informing high school students. However, an expansion of the program could benefit many more young people, and possibly their parents and other relatives, if the program had the resources to include a larger audience. This would be especially effective if all middle school and high school students could be exposed to comprehensive and medically accurate contraceptive methods in a professional and unbiased manner. This would absolutely reduce the number of unplanned pregnancies and the spread of sexually transmitted infections in young people. Teaching young people about proper contraceptive use would not encourage them to become sexually active, but would promote safe sex with conscious efforts to prevent unwanted pregnancy and the spread of disease.

PPMT Teen Board had a positive impact on me personally and on the community of Billings through its outreach and education of young people. A termination of this type of education in the schools would be detrimental to the health of the community and especially that of the youth.

Sincerely,

Alec

Former PPMT Teen Board Participant